THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) It has been the constant endeavour of the Government to promote exports including those of commercial vehicles and passenger cars. The value of the above exports during the last three years are furnished below:

(Rs. Crores)

	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92 (upto Dec. 91)
Commercial Vehicles	124·04	161·74	112·06
Passenger cars	17·04	22·80	107·35

SOURCE: Engineering Export Promotion Council.

Regular Operation of Auction Platforms of Tombacco

114. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that auction platforms of tobacco are not operating regularly in Andhra Pradesh due to growers' agitation;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to redress the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There has been since 13-4-1992 some resentment among the growers on account of fall in prices of tobacco as compared to the last year. At 15 out of 23 platforms auctions have remained suspended.

(c) Taking note of the resentment of the tobacco growers, the Governmeet advised the Tobacco Board to immediately hold an emergency meeting of the Board to take stock of the situation and to take remedial steps. The Chairman of the Tobacco Board has impressed upon the traders including the exporters and the manufacturers of cigarettes the need for offering remunerative prices to the farmers in the overall interest of the industry. Major buyers including the Russians have also been approached to step up their purchases.

Export of Tobacco to the Erstwhile USSR

115. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the protocol/agreement for the export of tobacco to erstwhile USSR and when it was signed;

(b) what is the amount for which individual orders were signed; and

(c) what are the reasons for the gap between the above two?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) (a) to (c) Protocol between the Government of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on the trade turnover and payment in 1992 was signed on 22nd February, 1992. It envisaged export of 25,000 tonnes of tobacco and 3 billion pieces of cigarettes to Russia. The Russian buyers have contracted for 15,000 tonnes of tobacco and 3 billion pieces of cigarettes so far. The